

WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Rep. Harry Mitchell today secured several key victories for Arizona's public transportation system and for the East Valley's Williams Gateway Airport. Mitchell's funding requests to support local transportation needs were included in the Transportation-HUD Appropriations Bill which passed the House this evening by a 268-153 vote.

"Arizona is a rapidly growing state, and we need to build a transportation infrastructure that meets our future needs," said Mitchell.

Mitchell worked to secure funding for several local mass transportation priorities. Included in the appropriations bill is \$90 million to build 19.6 miles of METRO rail for the [Valley's light rail system](#), which is scheduled to open in December 2008. The light rail funding was included in the President's budget proposal.

The Transportation-HUD Appropriations Bill also included other Mitchell funding requests that benefit mass transit, including:

- \$500,000 for Valley Metro Phoenix/Glendale West Valley Operating Facilities,
- \$200,000 to construct an East Valley Bus Maintenance Facility,
- \$200,000 for a Valley Metro METRO Tempe Extension Alternatives Analysis, and
- \$200,000 for a Valley Metro METRO Mesa Extension Alternatives Analysis.

Mitchell also secured \$1.3 million to construct additional taxiway at [Williams Gateway Airport](#) in Mesa. Williams Gateway is the third busiest airport in Arizona, and the busiest contract tower airport in the country. Williams Gateway projects significant growth in air carrier and general aviation operations in the near term, in part as a result of an additional 500,000 square feet of new hangar space over the next 18 to 24 months.

Additional Mitchell funding requests for Arizona transportation priorities contained in the bill:

- \$200,000 for Scottsdale's [SkySong](#), and
- \$500,000 for Scottsdale Indian Bend Road Improvements.

Mitchell is the first representative from Arizona's Fifth Congressional District to voluntarily release his funding requests. A full list of Mitchell's funding requests can be viewed at http://mitchell.house.gov/news/view_article.asp?ID=82